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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY 24, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for February 24, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

EVRENSEL / CUMHURİYET: Regarding the incident of the M/V Ulla, the ship which sank in Iskenderun Bay in September 2004, Iskenderun Environment Association filed a complaint against 19 public officials including two prime ministers, two ministers, three governors, three port chairmen, and two customs directors with the Iskenderun Prosecutor. The Supreme Court of Appeals has sent the petitions to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to conduct a preliminary investigation about the three governors.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Following the CHP (Republican People's Party) leader's visit to earthquake-hit Hakkari at the onset of February and yesterday's distribution of the aid raised in the CHP-initiated-campaign for the victims of the earthquake, a group of CHP deputies is going to announce tomorrow the Hakkari earthquake report they have been working on for a while.

OZGUR GUNDEM: TUHAD-DER (Solidarity for Inmates' Relatives Association) distributed shoes, which were donated by a businessman, to 65 poor children in Diyarbakir. The authorities of the association requested that the businessmen contribute more donations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

1. HURRIYET (CUKUROVA): Ali Ihsan Mutlu, Director of the Gaziantep's Authority for Developing and Supporting SMEs, announced that the Authority granted 1 million new Turkish lira (\$770,000) to SMEs in 2004 to facilitate their harmonization with EU regulations through increasing productivity and quality; two conditions necessary to increase the export capability of the enterprises as well, said Mutlu.

2. BOLGE / EVRENSEL: Halil Delibas, Deputy General Secretary of the Mersin Chamber of Marine Commerce, announced in a written report that the magnitude of the port traffic in 2004 was the largest in the last six years. According to the report, 3,968 ships visited the port for operations and 16,522,000 tons of goods were handled.

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